"DER PASTORSSOHN" PLAYED.

AN ACTOR'S OWN DRAMA AND BOTH UNREAL AND ABSURD.

He Is the First Violin and His Sweetheart, a Grand Opera Singer With a Past, Has Been Slandered—So She Takes Poison; He Plays a Dirge—Play's Herr Bonn's.

Ferdinand Bonn, the German actor, is a busy man. In fancy we see him arise at an early hour, and after a muttered prayer and coffee plunge into the thick of things. To give a true picture of his daily life an artist would have to portray him as writing a comedy with one lobe of his brain, learning a new rôle with the other, playing the fiddle with his two hands—and main strength—and with his feet working the pedals of an automatic piano. Like Julius Cæsar, he seems able to accomplish fourteen tasks at once, including dictation of cablegrams to Berlin, where he intends to manage a theatre some day. Altogether an extraordinary man and a strenuous.

Last night at the Irving Place Theatre, not content with appearing in a new part, he must also reappear as dramatist. "Der Pastorssohn" a four-act piece is by Herr Bonn. It is an actor's play. It is theatric. It is melodramatic. Bonn during his busy career has played many parts, seen many striking situations. Some of them he remembers in this affecting souvenir of his. The story is a simple one. A concert master of a Munich orchestra—i. e., the first violin—falls in love with an opera singer of the Royal Opera. She has a past; but—and here Bonn's originality displays itself—it is a spotless past. She has been "protected" by an old man with a noble heart; and without doubt softening of the brain. He must have been crazy!

The artistic and philistine world of Munich is not so noble. There is gossip. The violinist suffers. He has taken his betrothed to Nuremberg, there to gain his parents' consent. His father is a clergyman—a sort of clerical *Colonel Schwartz* of "Magda." He smells a doubtful record, after the manner of his cloth. There is scandal. There is slander. Finally, through the successful machinations of a malevolent couple, the opera singer is discredited, her young man's parents pensioned—that is, sent forth from the ministry, and the musician himself dropped by his associates. It is too much. The sensitive singer takes poison to the melancholy fiddling of Herr Bonn. It is all very sad, very unreal, very absurd.

There are some amusing minor characters, for the most part caricatured. Children sing hymns to the strains of a cabinet organ—and Herr Bonn plays. Indeed we believe that he wrote the play around his violin. There is an amusing dinner scene, well acted by the Conried company. Hedwig von Osterman, who carries her pretty gowns well, looked very handsome. She was funny as a "rough diamond." Georgine von Neundorff was excellent as the pastor's wife, and Kierschner, in an exaggerated rôle, did all he could.

The author-actor reminded us of the young painter in "Das Grosse Licht," especially in his moods of angry madness. He put the mute on his violin and dug out a sepulchral tone from his G string. The girl died happy. She was Bertha Rocco.

Royal opera house dramatic sopranos hardly die from a little gossip. Rather have they been known to sulk and sicken for want of it—in the newspapers. But how did she poison herself? The play should be rechristened "Slander; or, the Unexpected Seidlitz Powder."

DISORDER IN LONDON THEATRE.

Former Occupants of the Gallery Object to the Late Comers.

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN.

LONDON, Feb. 10.—The reopening of the Criterion Theatre to-night without a gallery led to turbulence, which was nearly a riot. Those who were accustomed to sitting in the gallery took refuge in the pit, which is near the orchestra stalls, and being unaccustomed to having their view obstructed by selfish late comers in the stalls, the allowing of which is one of the curses of London theatre mismanagement, they roared their protests and demanded that the curtain be lowered until the late comers ceased their annoyance.

The objectors for some time virtually held up the play. They became quiet temporarily, but at the final fall of the curtain there was a storm of groans, hisses and shouts.

Eventually the police were called and they ordered the disturbers out. Many of them complied, but others refused and were forcibly ejected amid cries of "Shame!" The gallery was compulsorily closed by order of the County Council.

WHEATCROFT AMATEURS ACT.

Most of Them Girls and Pretty and All in Stunning Gowns.

The students of the Stanhope-Wheatcroft Dramatic School gave a performance at the Madison Square Theatre yesterday afternoon, and reckless indeed was the man who forced his way into an audience of densely wedged women—mostly pretty girls. Very ambitious was the gallant band of amateurs that charged upon two one act plays, "Cupid's Messenger" and "Who's to Win Him," and a full-fledged four-act comedy-drama entitled "Consuelo," written by Willis Steell.

One noted with regret that luxuriance in gowning has invaded the amateur stage. The ballroom scene in the Steell comedy was positively glittering with superb toilettes—at least so it seemed to THE SUN's theatrical reporter. Grace Whiting as *Mrs. Smith Arnold* for example. This young woman literally created a sensation with her Amelia Bingham shoulders and her natural, humorous acting, not to mention her closely moulded robe. And Estelle Weir as *Beatrice Pomeroy* (a wife who turns up most inconveniently after her husband had fallen in love with a girl, supposing his naughty wife dead), has temperament of a decided sort.

She was attired most becomingly in dazzling black and looked stunning. Fanny Wilson Jordan was *Consuelo*. She has talent. She, too, did not forget to dress effectively, her ball gown, which arrived in Act II, being an artistic confection.

All this gorgeousness proved an opiate to criticism. Mr. Steell's comedy turned into melodrama at the close of Act III., but our eyes were enchanted by the clothes and good looks of the girls. We even forgot the bad acting of the men and boys.

DIDN'T INTEND TO BE FRISKY.

Amelia Bingham Says She Might Have Been, but the Author Didn't Plan It So.

Amelia Bingham summoned reporters to her dressing room at Wallack's Theatre last night and announced that the critics who pitched into her for not being frisky in "The Frisky Mrs. Johnson," had done her an injustice. She said that Clyde Fitch, the author of the play, had not intended her to be any friskier than she had been at the first performance on Monday night.

"If he had," said Miss Bingham, "I could have been a great deal friskier. I could have danced around—and—and done all sorts of frisky things. As for this Earl of Rosslyn, who criticises me, he asked for a part in the play and because I rejected him he is trying to get even with me."

MISS SMYTH PLAYS HER OPERA.

A Piano Recital of "Der Wald" for Those Who Are to Produce It Next March.

Ethel Smyth, the composer of "Der Wald," gave the first hearing of her opera yesterday to the forces at the Metropolitan Opera House. She played the work on the piano in one of the assembly rooms of the theatre before an audience which included Alfred Hertz, the conductor; Johann Elmblad, the stage manager, and some of the artists who are to have the leading rôles. It has been decided that it will not be possible to give the opera before March.

One of the novelties of next week's programme at the opera will be the appearance of Mme. Nordica as *Marguerite* in "Faust." She has not sung the part for six years at least.

On Monday "Die Meistersinger" will be sung for the first time this year by MM. Van Rooy, Anthes and Bispham and Mmes. Gadski and Schumann-Heink. On Friday "Otello" will have its last performance and on Tuesday and Thursday the first two operas of the Nibelungen Ring will be sung. The demand for seats for these performances has been so great that a third performance of the Ring operas will probably be given.

"Ernani" will have its third performance at the Saturday matinée.

THEATRE MANAGER LOCKED UP.

Hotel Proprietors Couldn't Find the Security for Herbert's Bill.

George W Herbert, the young theatrical manager who failed to make the Herbert Stock company a success at the Circle Theatre recently, was taken a prisoner to Police Headquarters last night on the complaint of the proprietors of the Hotel Wellington. Detective Carey of the hotel arrested him on a warrant as he was entering Wallack's Theatre with a woman.

The detective said that Herbert formerly lived at the Wellington and when he left he owed a bill for which he gave the hotel people a bill of sale for two carriages and a horse which he said he had at Larchmont. The hotel people, according to the detective, were unable to find the carriages and the horse. Herbert, when arrested, said it was all a misunderstanding.

News of Plays and Players.

Blanche Ring has put away her starring ambition for a while and will play the title rôle in "The Jewel of Asia," in which James T. Powers begins an engagement at the Criterion next week. Ludwig Englander has written some new songs for her.

Charles Frohman will be a passenger on the Oceanic to-day, and he expects to remain abroad for about six months. He has seven plays going in London and fifteen companies in the provinces and on the Continent, and expects to bring out several new things in the British capital before Easter. This would seem to mean that he will have plenty to do during his absence.

DIAMOND IN A METEORITE.

Natural History Museum Now Has It on Exhibition—Cut Corundum Easily.

George Frederick Kunz, owner of the diamond found in a meteorite in the Cañon Diablo, Arizona, in 1891, has put it on exhibition for the first time in the American Museum of Natural History, along with several other valuable exhibits.

The diamond lies imbedded in a piece of the meteorite weighing about eight pounds and is perfect in shape, although small. It rests in a small section of less pure carbon, half an inch in diameter, which is itself surrounded by solid meteorite iron.

The meteorite was found by Prof. G. A. Koenig at the foot of Crater Mountain, Arizona. Thinking that he had discovered a vein of pure iron, the professor sent the specimen, with several others, to Dr. A. E. Foote of Philadelphia. It was the trouble experienced in cutting the specimen into sections which led to the discovery of the diamond. Nearly all of Dr. Foote's chisels and a valuable emory wheel were ruined by contact with the carbon.

Polished corundum, the hardest substance next to diamonds, was tried in polishing, but the troublesome piece cut through it like a knife through gypsum. The grains exposed were small and black, and because of their hardness and indifference to chemical agents Prof. Koenig pronounced them diamonds. Mr. Kunz examined the Cañon Diablo iron later and found that a small grain which survived chemical action on the specimen not only polished another diamond, but cut glass, topaz and a polished sapphire.

The exhibit also includes a meteorite stone weighing eighty-one pounds, which fell at Warren, Ia., in 1881, late one afternoon. Its descent was witnessed by the inhabitants.

HEBREWS ALL STIRRED UP.

Protest Against the Closing of Their Workshops on Sunday.

Preparations are being made by the Orthodox Hebrews of the East Side to call a mass meeting of East Side citizens to protest against the indiscriminate enforcement of the Sunday closing law on the East Side, in case the police close all the shops and factories next Sunday as they did last. According to the East Siders the police last Sunday forced a day of idleness upon about 10,000 Orthodox Hebrews, who had observed the Hebrew Sabbath by not working on Saturday. A committee of the Garment Workers' Association will in the meantime call on Mayor Low to protest against indiscriminate closing.

"We do not object to the closing of the tailor shops in Greene, Mercer, Bleecker and some other streets," said President Grossman of the association yesterday, "because there the tailors work on both Saturdays and Sundays. On the East Side, though, most of the people refrain from working on Saturdays. If Commissioner Greene wants to be just and fair he will allow Orthodox Hebrews to work on Sundays."

DR. PAXTON A WILL WITNESS.

Says Mrs. Winthrop Was Perfectly Sane When She Made Her Bequest to Princeton.

Several aged friends and acquaintances of Mrs. Mary J. Winthrop, who left a large bequest out of her $2,500,000 estate to the Princeton Theological Seminary, were in court yesterday before Surrogate Fitzgerald to testify concerning her mental and physical condition when she made her will. She died on Aug. 11 last, aged 86, and though her will is to admitted to probate, several distant relatives are contending that the seminary cannot legally accept the bequest.

Among the witnesses was the Rev. Dr. William M. Paxton, president emeritus of Princeton Seminary, who was a witness of the will when it was executed in 1875. He declared that Mrs. Winthrop was of sound mind and knew perfectly well what she was doing.

NEW RULER OF CHINESE MASONS.

Grand Master's Honors Have Come to E. Lung of Indianapolis.

The Chinese Masons in this city have just received news of the election of a new Grand Master, E. Lung, a wealthy Chinese merchant in Indianapolis. E. Lung is the new head of the Chinese order in this country. Among his countrymen he is better known under his Chinese name of Chin Gum Sing. His inauguration was joyfully celebrated in Indianapolis in connection with the Chinese New Year, which ended last Saturday.

Last Night's Dances.

One of the Cinderella cotillons was given last night at Delmonico's. Some of the patronesses, who are Mrs. John S. Foster, Mrs. James E. Newcomb, Mrs. W. C. Little, Mrs. C. E. Sprague, Mrs. W. A. Parke, Mrs. C. H. Van Brunt, Mrs. F. S. Armstrong, Mrs. J. M. Varian, Mrs. R. A. Cowles, Mrs. J. K. O. Sherwood, Mrs. C. Montieth Gilpin, and Mrs. G. F. Newland, received the guests.

The third of the neighborhood cotillons was given at Dodworth's in East Forty-ninth street. Herbert Coffin led the cotillon.

The fourth meeting of the Fortnightly Class was held in the Astor Gallery of the Waldorf-Astoria. Frederic Woodruff led the cotillon, and among the favors were tall Easter lilies, apple and potato pincushions and paperweights.

BOOKS AND BOOKMAKING.

A volume of literary essays by Frank Norris is to be published by Doubleday, Page & Co. and will be included in the complete memorial edition of Mr. Norris's works now in preparation.

Margaret Horton Potter, author of a number of novels of which "Ishtar of Babylon" is the most recent, is not yet 23. According to her friends she proved at 13 that she was what our friend Mrs. Malaprop would call "a progeny" by contributing a phenomenal collection of poems and stories to her school paper.

Moreover, to her influence was due the school custom of writing all notes, however unimportant, in the form of poetry. A collection of these metrical schoolgirl notes might make amusing reading if they had been saved for the edification of the public.

Winston Churchill has taken his time in preparing the novel which is to be published this spring. With "The Crisis" beyond the 400,000 mark and still selling, he can afford to be leisurely. No definite information as to the title or contents of the new novel has yet been given out.

Dodd, Mead & Co. announce for March publication a novel by Josiah Flynt. It will deal with criminal life and is to be called "The Redemption of Roderick Clowd."

Gertrude Atherton is still true to Hamilton. She is to follow her much-discussed novel, "The Conqueror," with "A Few of Hamilton's Letters," and it seems that her visit to Denmark was connected with the preparation of this second book.

The collection will include heretofore unpublished correspondence upon State matters and many interesting personal letters, one of which gives a graphic description of the tornado that ravaged St. Croix just before Hamilton left the West Indies for the American Colonies.

The biography of W. W. Story, the poet and sculptor, is being written by Henry James and will be published under the title of "William Wetmore Story and His Friends, from Letters, Diaries and Recollections."

Walter Page, formerly editor of the *Forum* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, and now editor of the *World's Work*, is a North Carolina man and was educated at the Randolph-Macon College in Virginia and at Johns Hopkins. Naturally, his strongest interests are Southern, and his writing has been done with constant reference to the building up of a broad national feeling in the South. He is now lecturing in Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia upon "The New Spirit of Nationality."

Elliott Flower has a political novel ready for publication. Its title is not yet chosen, but the publishers are telling enough about its subject matter to make politicians wonder who has been sacrificed to this Flower holiday.

The novel is a love story in a setting of municipal politics, and the reviewers are urged to indulge in guessing contests by the statement that a large number of the stories and experiences introduced into the book are taken literally from political episodes in real life.

Andrew Lang is planning a visit to the United States this year, and from here will make a pilgrimage to Samoa, the home of his good friend, Robert Louis Stevenson.

Apropos of Stevenson, Sidney Colvin, who seemed of all men the best fitted to write Stevenson's biography declined the task at the time of his friend's death. Now, however, he announces his intention of preparing a life of Stevenson and the natural conclusion is that he has not found the Balfour life altogether satisfactory.

Miss Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore is one of the most interesting literary women of America and a confirmed globe trotter.

Probably no other living woman knows the Orient so intimately as she and there is hardly an out-of-the way nook of the East that she has not visited and studied.

She is an officer of the National Geographic Society, was one of the secretaries of the Oriental Congress at Rome and is the author of a large number of books dealing with the Far East. In fact, with her tremendous store of information and experience she can be relied upon to furnish a timely and entertaining book whenever events attract particular attention to things Oriental.

Her "China; the Long-Lived Empire," came hot from the press during the recent Chinese troubles, and now that the Durbar turns all eyes toward India, Miss Scidmore comes forward with "Winter India," an entertaining and picturesque story of Indian life.

The book contains, by the way, one interview with an Anglo-Indian Major's wife who is a veritable Kipling type and voices Anglo-Indian opinion of Kipling. "a common sort of person who went around with the Tommies, you know."

Maurice Hewlett's novel written around Mary Queen of Scots is to be ready in May.

Hamlin Garland is busy with lectures upon the American Indian, but his lectures will probably offer no Indian study more interesting than that in "The Captain of the Gray Horse Troop."

Comparatively few persons know that there is in the British Museum a phonographic cylinder recording the voice of Robert Browning.

Shortly before his death Browning spoke into the record and once since his death the record has been repeated before a group of his friends in the house of the late Hugh Haweis.

Two narrative volumes devoted to the Harriman Alaskan expedition were published in 1901. Since then the scientists who accompanied the expedition have been hard at work classifying the collections and scientific results, and the fruits of their labors are about to be embodied in twelve volumes and published by Doubleday, Page & Co.

With the two preliminary volumes they will make a remarkable addition to the literature of science.

Dr. S. Weir Mitchell is the oldest story teller now writing for the English reading public. His latest volume, "A Comedy of Conscience," is just about to be issued by the *Century* Company.

There is much comment upon woman's invasion of the field of fiction, and some critics would have us believe that thereby hangs the decay of fiction, concerning which Benjamin Swift writes so feelingly. The list of feminine names attached to announcements of forthcoming novels has its encouraging points, if one can argue future merit from past achievement.

Lucas Malet is to give us another novel. Mrs. Craigie will publish "The Vineyard," Mrs. Humphry Ward will be represented by "Lady Rose's Daughter." Mrs. Dudeney's "The Maternity of Harriott Wickham" and "Folly Corner" should win a hearing for her "Robin Brilliant."

Beatrice Harraden will break a long silence with a new novel, "Katherine Frensham." Mrs. Banks will follow "Oldfield" by another Kentucky novel.

If Alice Brown's "The Mannerings" is as good as her short stories of New England it will be well worth reading. "Lovey Mary" will succeed "Mrs. Wiggs."

There are others; but here is a list that may challenge men novelists to a comparison of spring crops.

Sarah Jeanette Duncan, who lives in India when not travelling, is a friend of Lady Curzon and has written a timely story of Lady Curzon's home life for the March number of *Harper's Bazar*.

Charles Edward Rich, author of "The New Boy at Dale," has himself been through some of the virulent phases of boy enthusiasm. At 16 he was bound to run away to sea.

His father, being a man of sense, sent him to sea. He was shipped on an antiquated bark in the teeth of a roaring gale, which stayed with the boat during the forty-three days it took her to beat her way to Belfast.

The skipper was a daredevil with a record for carrying sail. Every old sail was carried away during the first week and new canvas bent in the face of the storm. The treatment cured the boy's sea fever.

The boom in Wagner study has been a fortunate thing for one young author. Miss Anna Chapin was only 17 when she wrote "Wonder Tales From Wagner," but she builded better than she knew.

With the rise of the Wagner cult came steadily increasing popularity for the book, which still sells remarkably well.

Edmond Rostand's ceremonial admission to the French Academy has been postponed until June 11, and at the author's own request. Let the long line of illustrious ones to whom Academy doors were closed meditate upon that.

M. Rostand is, it appears, completely absorbed in writing his first novel. Not even the French Academy can stop him. It must wait.

The novel is to be called "The Master of the Sea," and the author says that trusts and other phases of life in the newer countries will figure in it.

Jail for John Y. McKane's Wicked Partner

John Y. McKane's former partner, Herman Branze of 340 Thirty-fourth street, Brooklyn, was sent to State Prison yesterday for five years by Judge Newburger in the General Sessions for having stolen $1,500 from Albert Joseph of 140 Nassau street. The money was given to Branze to pay an insurance premium. Branze has already d one time twice.